

PO8052: Russian Politics under Putin
Syllabus
Hilary Term 2021
Location and time TBA

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Module Description

After over 70 years of Soviet communist rule, in the 1990s the Russian Federation found itself struggling with political disintegration, chaotic democracy, and caustic legacies of a planned economy. This course explores the evolution of Russian politics under Vladimir Putin—from the transition from Yeltsin’s Russia in the 1990s to the evolutions of the “vertical of power” in Putin’s third term in office. This module covers topics including how the Putin regime has involved corruption in Russia, “petropolitics,” electoral fraud, and new social movements.

Assessment

Participation (15%)

Student attendance, participation, and discussion is crucial to this seminar. Students are expected to have read all required readings before class. You should plan on digging in deeply with each reading—you are advised to develop critiques of readings, connections between them, suggestions for improvement or future research, and to build links to other political science research before you arrive to discuss them with the group in class.

Students will be evaluated on the quality of their input in discussions. Asking questions, bringing evidence, explaining your views and thoughts, and debating issues of significance, relevance, research design, real-world applicability, accuracy, and other factors will be important in participating fully.

Response Papers (20%)

Students will be required to submit two response papers over the five weeks of the module. These papers should **not** offer a summary of the readings for that week, but, rather, they should engage with the readings. Critiques, establishment of connections between readings, and other insightful thoughts coming from a critical perspective are all good elements to include, where appropriate. The response papers should engage with multiple required readings for that week, but can also include suggesting readings in addition.

Each response paper should be 600-900 words in length, double-spaced in 12pt font. They should be submitted to Blackboard by 5pm on the Tuesday before class. Late submissions will

not be accepted. You may not submit more than one response paper in the last two weeks of the mini-module.

In-class Presentation (15%)

Students will each make one short, live presentation to the class in weeks 2-5 of the mini-term. The topics and structure of the presentations are TBA and scheduling will depend on module enrollment.

Final essay (50%)

Students are required to submit a final essay at the end of the mini-term. The essay should show engagement with the material from across the mini-module as well as readings, concepts, and ideas from the recommended reading list and/or other sources.

You should apply these materials and ideas to an essay that assesses the current state of Putin's rule in the Russian political system and offers critically-engaged thoughts on his succession problem and prospects for Russian politics in the near term. Your paper should use one or more of the themes from this mini-module (the five topics, one each week on the syllabus) to say how the theme(s) are shaping prospects for Putin's succession, Russian democracy, Russian economic liberalization and growth, and/or rule of law in Russia over the next 2-5 years. You can and should engage with the relevant literature, while offering a thoughtful critique of it and what it can tell us about these questions.

The essay should be about 2,500 words in length including everything but the reference list; double-spaced in 12pt font. The deadline for submission to Blackboard is **11:59pm (midnight) on [DATE TBA]**. Creativity, clear and strong argumentation, a good structure, and clear writing are important features of a good essay. The essay should not focus on literature review, historical narrative (or other narrative rather than analytical approaches), or pure summarization. I want to hear your thoughts and analysis.

Plagiarism

Please do not plagiarize. Academic dishonesty is a serious matter, with serious consequences that can result in receiving no credit for an assignment, a failing grade for the module, and even expulsion from the program. It is never permissible to turn in any work that contains others' ideas without proper acknowledgment. It is your responsibility to make sure that your work meets the standard of academic honesty set forth in the College Calendar (see <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/calendar>). If you are paraphrasing, cite the source. If you are quoting, use quotation marks and appropriate citation. Remember that academic integrity is a reflection of one's character. In addition, we strongly recommend that you visit <http://www.plagiarism.org/> for more information on what is and is not plagiarism. Lastly, students are required to only submit "new work" in each module, which means work that has not been submitted previously in any other university module. Students who wish to use previously submitted work as part of a new project will need the approval of the lecturer.

Readings

Some readings for the mini-module, such as book chapters, will be made available on Blackboard. Other readings can be found on Google Scholar or will be provided in digital copy.

Note: I may adjust the contents of the syllabus somewhat in the next few weeks as we work through the readings.

CLASS SCHEDULE

1. From Yeltsin to Putin 3.0: Personalism, ‘The Vertical of Power,’ and Competing Centers of Power

Required reading:

- Peter Rutland, “Putin’s Path to Power.” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 2000, 16, 4.
- Marshall Goldman. 2008. *Petrostate: Putin, Power and the New Russia*. Oxford University Press. Pages 93-123.
- Andrei Shleifer and Daniel Treisman. “Russia: A Normal Country: Russia After Communism.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. Winter 2005. 19:1, 151-174.
- Ivan Krastev and Gleb Pavlovsky. 2018 “The Arrival of Post-Putin Russia.” European Council on Foreign Relations.
- Ian Bremmer and Samuel Charap. 2007. “The Siloviki in Putin’s Russia: Who They Are and What They Want,” *The Washington Quarterly*.

Recommended reading:

- Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, “The Myth of the Authoritarian Model: How Putin’s Crackdown Holds Russia Back,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, 1 (2008)
- Documentary: “I, Putin”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izEAND_ehak
- Brian D. Taylor (2017) “The Russian Siloviki & Political Change”, *Daedulus*
- Christian Neef and Matthias Schepp. 2011. “The Puppet President: Medvedev’s Betrayal of Russian Democracy” *Spiegel Online*.
- Lilia Shevtsova, *Putin’s Russia* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003)

2. Electoral Authoritarianism in Russia

Required reading:

- Stephen White. 2011. “Elections: Russian Style.” *Europe-Asia Studies*. 63(4).
- Timothy Frye, Ora John Reuter, and David Szakonyi, “Political Machines at Work: Voter Mobilization and Electoral Subversion in the Workplace,” *World Politics* 66:2 (April 2014), pp. 195-228.
- Timothy Colton and Michael McFaul. 2001. “Are Russians Undemocratic?” Carnegie Endowment Working Paper.
- Enikolopov, Ruben, Vasily Korovkin, Maria Petrova, Konstantin Sonin, and Alexei Zakharov. 2013 “Field Experiment Estimate of Electoral Fraud in Russian Parliamentary Elections” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 110(2).

- Reuter, Ora John, Noah Buckley, Alexandra Shubenkova, and Guzel Garifullina. “Local elections in authoritarian regimes: An elite-based theory with evidence from Russian mayoral elections.” *Comparative political studies* 49, no. 5 (2016): 662-697.

Recommended reading:

- Andrew Wilson, *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World* (Yale University Press, 2005)
- Allina-Pisano, Jessica. 2010. “Social contracts and authoritarian projects in the post-Soviet space: the use of administrative resource.” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 43: 373- 382*

3. Russia’s Political Economy

Required reading:

- Marshall Goldman. 2004. “Putin and the Oligarchs,” *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2004.
- Noah Buckley. 2018. “Corruption and Power in Russia.” FPRI Research Paper.
- David Szakonyi. 2018. “Governing Business: The State and Business in Russia.” FPRI Research Paper.
- Vadim Volkov. 1999. “Violent Entrepreneurship in Post-Communist Russia.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 51, no. 5.
- Timothy Frye and Andrei Shleifer. 1997. “The Invisible Hand and the Grabbing Hand.” *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings*. 554-559
- Sergei Guriev and Aleh Tsyvinski, “Challenges Facing the Russian Economy after the Crisis” in Anders Åslund, Sergei Guriev, and Andrew C. Kuchins (eds.) *Russia After the Global Crisis*. Peterson Institute.

Recommended reading:

- Daniel Treisman, “Putin’s Silovarchs,” *Orbis* 5, 1 (2008)
- Jordan Gans-Morse, “Threats to Property Rights in Russia: From Private Coercion to State Aggression,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 28, 3 (2012): 263-295.
- Timothy Frye. 2010. “Corruption and Rule of Law” in Anders Åslund, Sergei Guriev, and Andrew C. Kuchins (eds.) *Russia After the Global Crisis* Peterson Institute
- Peter Rutland and Natasha Kogan 1998. “The Russian Mafia: Between Hype and Reality,” *Transitions Online*
- Sergei Cheloukhine and Joseph King “Corruption networks as a sphere of investment activities in modern Russia” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*
- Vadim Volkov. 2014. ‘The Russian Mafia: Rise and Extinction’ in Paoli L. *The Oxford Handbook of Organized Crime*. Oxford University Press.
- Clifford Gaddy and Barry Ickes, *Russia’s Virtual Economy* (Brookings Institution Press, 2002)

4. State and Society: Discontent, Civil Society, and Stagnation

Required reading:

- Graeme Robertson. 2013. “Protesting Putinism: The Election Protests of 2011 – 2012 in Broader Perspective.” *Problems of Post-Communism*, 60(2).

- Vladimir Gel'man. 2015. "Political Opposition in Russia: A Troubled Transformation." *Europe-Asia Studies*, 67:2, 177-191.
- Robert W. Orttung. 2013. "Navalny's Campaign to be Moscow Mayor," *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 136, September 16, 2-5.
- Brian Taylor. 2013. "Putin's Crackdown," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.277, September.
- Robertson, Graeme and Samuel Greene. "The Kremlin Emboldened: How Putin Wins Support." *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 28 no. 4, 2017, p. 86-100.

Recommended reading:

- Samuel Greene 2017 "From Boom to Bust: Hardship, Mobilization & Russia's Social Contract," *Daedulus*
- March, Luke. 2009. "Managing Opposition in a Hybrid Regime: Just Russia and Parastatal Opposition" *Slavic Review*. 69(3)
- Graeme B. Robertson. 2009. "Managing Society: Protest, Civil Society, and Regime in Putin's Russia" *Slavic Review*
- Regina Smyth, "Beyond United Russia," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.302, September 2013

5. Spheres of Influence and Russia's International Presence

Required reading:

- Daniel Treisman. 2011. *The Return: Russia's Journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev*. Chapter 9.
- Daniel Treisman. 2016. "Why Putin Took Crimea." *Foreign Affairs* 95.3 (May/June).
- Michael McFaul, Stephen Stestanovich, and John Mearsheimer. 2014. "Faulty Powers: Who Started the Ukraine Crisis?" *Foreign Affairs* 93.6.
- Andrei Tsygankov. 2015. "Vladimir Putin's last stand: the sources of Russia's Ukraine policy", *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 31:4, 279-303.
- Richard Sakwa, "'New Cold War' or twenty years' crisis? Russia and international politics", *International Affairs*, Volume 84, Issue 2, March 2008, Pages 241–267

Recommended reading:

- Maria Popova, "Why the Orange Revolution Was Short and Peaceful and Euromaidan Long and Violent," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 61, no. 6 (November-December 2014), pp. 64-70
- Dmitri Trenin. 2010. "Russian Foreign Policy: Modernization or Marginalization?" in Anders Åslund, Sergei Guriev, and Andrew C. Kuchins (eds.) *Russia After the Global Crisis* Peterson Institute
- Fyodor Lukyanov. 2016. "Putin's Foreign Policy: the Quest to Restore Russia's Rightful Place" *Foreign Affairs*
- John Mearsheimer. 2014. "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin" *Foreign Affairs* 93.5